

MARYSVILLE MEMORIES

BY MAVIS & RON JACKSON

It's very many years ago now, but I remember fondly a holiday of a week or two spent with my parents in Marysville, staying at the Mary-Lyn guesthouse. Being 82 now and 10 years old then, it would have been in 1937 just before World War 2.

Our first holiday in Marysville was in 1946. We married on 31st August and next day travelled by train to Lilydale and Resort bus to Mary-Lyn Guest House. We were loaded up with cases and tennis racquets. We had both served in the Army in World War 2, Mavis as a Wireless Operator in a Signals Unit, and Ron as a Gunner in the 2/14th Field Regiment. So this was a holiday we were really looking forward to and it didn't let us down.

Our room was upstairs and looking out the window we could see the snow on nearby mountains. It was the first view of snow for us both. Our room only had a hand basin with cold water and the community bathroom and toilet were along the hall. The folks running the guest house were the Dowdle's and they did everything to make our stay pleasant. We were seated at a table for 8 placed quite near the kitchen. Our waiter and wife (kitchen duties) were on a working holiday. He would take our orders for food and then sometimes he would put an extra plate in front of Ron saying, "this will keep you going while you wait for your order". Ron managed to eat everything placed in front of him. We both enjoyed the variety of meals, and we must say that after Army rations it certainly was a treat.

Rationing was still in force, and one day one of the ladies at our table asked me if I managed alright with ration tickets and did I have to cut lunches. This of course was all foreign to me, as at home after the army my Mother had looked after such things. I managed to stammer out an answer, but in later times we wondered if she realised we were newlyweds!!

Entertainment was very good, with a tennis court which we used. One of the men was called Ron 'Juice Jackson' because of the many juice games. In the evenings there would always be something on in the hall, sometimes a dance with music supplied by Mr and Mrs Fiske. She played the piano and he the saxophone. Fiske is a famous name in Marysville even to this day. One of the other guests at that time was Jock Hughes and family. He was a member of the Minstrel Show which was on radio station 3DB at that time. He went under the name of Jock McLaughan and he had with him some of the

Minstrels scripts, and would get some guests to take various parts. Ron gladly joined in this activity. It was a lot of fun.

During the days we would go for long walks through the nearby bushland, which was a far cry from the jungles of New Guinea where Ron had spent the last 2 years in the Army. It was just so beautiful and peaceful. The shops were few and there was a Hotel. On our last night we decided to visit the hotel. We met the waiter from the guest house and we sat and chatted with him. He told us then that he twigged that we were on our honeymoon, and that was his reason for giving Ron the extra food!! Cheeky. Drinks were in short supply, and there wasn't much to choose from, so we bought a bottle of Cherry Brandy (the only drink available) to take back to our room for our last night. Not knowing what we had, we tried to drink a glass of it - but no go. We found out later that it was a liqueur, to be drunk only in small amounts.

The guest house was called Mary-Lyn Holiday Resort at that time. This holiday was so very important to us in that we were now in the process of getting back to life after 4 years for Mavis and 5 years for Ron in the Army. We felt it was the beginning of a whole new life and what better place to start it than in Marysville. We stayed for 10 days at the cost of 10 Pounds for the two of us. I still have the receipt for that bill. Ron had just started work a while before we went away and his wage were 6 Guineas. Different from today. Our home address then was Surrey Hills.

Our next trip to Marysville was for our 25th Wedding Anniversary in 1971. The owners then were F&V Fiske. Maybe the same ones who had entertained us in 1946. Ron was working then, so we drove up on the Friday evening. We compared that trip by car with our first trip by train and bus. The rooms by then had ensuites, which was an improvement on the last trip. Again a lovely time was enjoyed, but a short one as we left on Sunday afternoon to go home. The fee for 2 days was \$26. I have the receipt for this trip also. We realised this time that there were no children staying as on the first trip. I think it was called Mary-Lyn, 50 & Over Holiday Resort. Our home address for this time was Blackburn South. There was another owner Malcolm Reid about 1980.

Our 3rd trip to Marysville came in September 1996 for our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Again we drove up, but more leisurely as Ron had retired by then. The owner then was Vaz Hovanessian and it was in the name of Hovanessian Group of Companies. This was a lovely stay. Lots of good company, some of whom were a group of people with Parkinson's Disease. They have regular holidays as a group and so compare notes with each other. We think we were privileged to spend time with them, their attitude was

so positive and we had to admire them. On this trip our home address was Blackburn North. Sadly when we got home we found that we had been burgled and a lot of our treasures had been taken.

A photo among the ones we are sending you is of a tree in the caravan park, which we call Kim's tree. Back in 1983 our daughter Glenda and husband Ken Veale and 2 daughters were spending the long weekend in early March there. One day the young people in the park were having fun chasing each other around and having lots of fun and laughing. Kim went up the tree to get away from the others and somehow had a terrible fall. She was taken first to Ferntree Gully Hospital, but it seemed she needed more care than was available there. So she was then taken to the Children's Hospital, where it was found she had serious injuries. She had a long stay there, came home in a wheelchair and then on crutches for some weeks. She is now a beautiful young woman.

When the bushfires raged on Black Saturday we were horrified. Early the next morning Glenda rang and said, "Marysville is gone". We were of course very upset to hear this. We plan to make a trip back to Marysville in a couple of weeks. I know there will be sadness for us, but we feel we would like to see it. I hope to contact a lady, Sally Anne Craig, who I understand is collecting cups and saucers to give to those who have lost so much.

A niece and husband of ours who live at Taggerty were affected by the fires, in that they were given 15 minutes to get out. They were taken to Alexandra and were there for weeks. They are just so traumatised by it all.

I think this is about all I can write for now.